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## Call Him Kay

Political pundits writing in the Oct. 18 edition of *The Daily News* here called it “probably Garth’s best commercial in several years.” The spot, which has also been touted on CNN and in several other daily newspapers that provide “grades” of political spots, is the :30 “Call Me Al” directed by Kay van de Linde, president of The Garth Group, David Garth’s political consultancy based here. Using Paul Simon’s “Bodyguard” song as a soundtrack, the spot (all text and still photographs) sets up the relationship between opponent George Pataki and controversial New York Senator Alfonse D’Amato. As the Simon instrumental plays, the final image is a news photo of D’Amato holding Pataki’s wrist to lead him through a crowd. As Simon sings “You can just call me Al, call me Al” the text reads “George Pataki? Maybe we should just call him Al!” and the camera zooms in on the D’Amato/Pataki hand-holding.

“For someone out there who likes Pataki and doesn’t like D’Amato, this presses a button—they have some new information about their candidate in their hands,” van de Linde said. He added that in the Cuomo ’94 campaign, Garth has hopefully silenced his critics that say he does not execute an acceptable volume of “negative” ads. The majority of the approximately 25 Cuomo spots being put together by van de Linde, produc-



A frame from the “Call Me Al” :30 directed by Kay van de Linde.

er Peter Powell and Garth himself are negative—what van de Linde called “solid negatives” that are based on issues. Overall, Garth believes in using numerous TV spots to start with voter testimonial :60s in the spring and eventually introduce the candidate talking to the camera as the election draws nigh.

Shooting in Beta SP video, offlining on an Avid for a high-resolution cut (with titles) for approval screenings with the candidate, and then posting on Frame:Runner’s digital Betacam system here, with audio post at The Audio Department here, has provided smooth sailing for the Cuomo campaign’s commercial output.

“The Avid advantages are quick turnaround—you can even

take it on location if you have to, and the approval process can be done right there—if the client wants changes, it’s changed on the spot,” van de Linde said. “Now it takes 10 minutes as opposed to three hours.” Previous campaigns have used an Avid, but Garth was going to an offline house for editing time. Now the company has a media composer in its Park Avenue offices here.

As for the Pataki/Cuomo battle, van de Linde said it does not measure up as a mudslinging slugfest compared to other campaigns being waged across the country.

“From what I have read, New York is pretty mild compared to the rest of the country,” van de Linde said.